

VENTILATION SYSTEM

The invention relates to a ventilation system for exchanging the air in a room with outside air.

Nowadays new and renovated buildings are so well insulated and airtight that natural ventilation is almost
5 zero. As humans exhale water vapor and carbon dioxide, artificial ventilation has to be installed, to keep water from condensing into the insulation and to keep the concentration of CO₂ and other gases emanating from building materials at safe levels. The buildings are so well insulated
10 that the heat loss that goes along with this necessary ventilation is the largest heat loss from the building when it is cold outside. Therefore heat recovery should be installed.

In order to retrieve the heat with a reasonable
15 efficiency it is necessary to balance the in- and outflow.

Most ventilation systems have now a heat exchanger that exchanges heat between the incoming fresh air stream and the outgoing stale air stream. This heat exchanger is installed centrally, mostly in the attic or top floor. The
20 stale air is taken from kitchen, toilets, and bathrooms by ducts, and the fresh air is distributed to bedrooms and sitting rooms, or offices in the building. These systems have several disadvantages. The cost of the ducts to guide the air to and from the several rooms are high. The ducts need space
25 in the building, which generally results in an increase of the story height. All windows of the building with such a central system have to remain closed, as opening them will

imbalance the inflow and outflow, which has a negative effect on the efficiency.

Known systems, for example from EP 1153250, can be installed in door and window posts, but do not have a
5 balancing mechanism.

All these known heat recovering ventilation systems use plate or honeycomb heat exchangers, where the two air flows are either in cross flow or in counter current flow at both sides of a paper or plastic thin sheet through which the
10 heat flows. This arrangement, together with the air speed, sets the energy requirement to achieve the heat exchange, because efficiency and pressure drop are coupled by physical equations that in the economic optimal design makes the electricity needs balance the heat savings for local systems.
15 In the centrally installed case, the electricity use far exceeds the heat saving, because of the extra pressure drop in the ducts.

In cold climates, such as in Canada and Scandinavia, where the use of heat recuperating ventilation is especially
20 indicated, these plate type heat exchanger have problems with freezing. The warm and humid stale air is cooled below the dewing point, and, still inside the plate stack, below the freezing point. The resulting ice clogs the channels, so that frequent thawing is necessary. This makes that in cold
25 weather, these ventilation systems cannot be used reliably. So, paradoxically, there where the need is highest, these ventilation systems cannot easily be used

It is an object of the invention to prevent or at least diminish the above mentioned disadvantages.

30 This object is reached by a ventilation system according to the invention, which system comprises:

- a fine-wire heat exchanger having a first channel and a second channel, which channels are in heat exchanging

contact with each other, and wherein the first channel has an inlet connected to outside air and an outlet connected to the air in the room, and wherein the second channel has an inlet connected to the air in the room and an outlet connected to the outside air;

- balancing means for balancing the flow in both channels, such that the heat transfer is maximized.

A fine-wire heat exchanger per se is known from NL 9301439. Such a fine-wire heat exchanger has a very high efficiency.

Unexpectedly, it has proven that when a fine-wire heat exchanger is used for a ventilation system, the ventilation system does not have such severe disadvantages, in particular when used in cold climates. Preliminary tests show that a ventilation system according to the invention will only freeze up after a long period of time, whereas conventional ventilation systems with plate type heat exchangers will freeze up within minutes.

In a preferred embodiment of the ventilation system according to the invention, the balancing means comprise:

- a ventilator arranged in the first channel;
- a ventilator arranged in the second channel;
- at least four temperature sensors arranged in the outlets and inlets of the first and second channel; and
- a controller for comparing the readings of the temperature sensors and for controlling the ventilators in the first and second channel, such that the temperature difference between the inlet and outlet of the first channel corresponds to the temperature difference between the inlet and outlet of the second channel.

These balancing means provide for a low cost system, which can maximize the efficiency of the fine-wire heat exchanger and thus maximize the heat recuperation.

In another preferred embodiment of the ventilation system according to the invention, the balancing means comprise:

- a first double acting cylinder, wherein the piston
5 defines a first chamber and a second chamber;
- a second double acting cylinder, wherein the piston defines a third chamber and a fourth chamber, wherein the piston of the first cylinder is connected to the piston of the second cylinder, such that when the first chamber is
10 enlarged by displacement of the pistons, the third chamber is also enlarged;
- a balancing means outlet and an balancing means inlet; and
- control means for alternately connecting the
15 balancing means outlet with either the first chamber or the fourth chamber, the balancing means inlet with either the second chamber or the third chamber, the first channel with either the fourth chamber or the first chamber, and the second channel with either the third chamber or the second
20 chamber.

This balancing system is especially suitable for surroundings, when a large pressure drop is present between the outside air and the air in the room. Such a pressure drop can result from windy weather at for example the seaside or
25 in mountain areas or high rise buildings. Using ventilators will require much electrical power in order to just overcome this pressure drop.

The two double acting cylinders provide a fully mechanical balancing system, which require only minimal
30 electrical power. This system can be operated with virtually no maintenance.

In another embodiment of the system according to the invention the balancing means comprise at least one

ventilator arranged in the balancing means inlet, balancing means outlet, the first channel or the second channel.

The ventilator provides the energy to overcome the friction and ensures that the mechanical balancing means will
5 always work reversibly.

The ventilator enables also the mechanical balancing system to operate also when there is no pressure difference between the outside air and the inside air. The ventilator provides always an over pressure, which drives the double
10 acting cylinders.

In stead of a ventilator, the double piston can also be driven directly by for example a liner motor.

In yet another embodiment the main dimensions of the heat exchanger are adapted to the inside main dimensions of a
15 dish washer. This enables the user to disassemble the ventilation system and to clean the heat exchanger, simply by placing the heat exchanger in a dish washer.

Generally a standard home dish washer has inside main dimensions of somewhat smaller than 0,6m. Therefore, the main
20 dimensions of the heat exchanger are preferably smaller than 0,55m.

The invention also relates to a combination of a facade, a room on the inside of and adjacent to the facade and a ventilation system according to any of the preceding
25 claims, wherein the inlet of the first channel of the system is connected to outside air on the outside of the facade and the outlet is connected to the air in the room, and wherein the inlet of the second channel is connected to the air in the room and the outlet is connected to the outside air.

30 Due to the high efficiency and low power consumption the ventilation system according to the invention is very suitable to be used per room. This eliminates the use of lengths of ducts and enables the users to decide whether they

would like to open the window or not. This will not have any influence on the balance of other ventilation systems in other rooms.

In a preferred embodiment, the ventilation system is
5 arranged substantially in the facade. In this way, it will not require much space and do not require additional ducts.

These and other features of the invention will be described in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

Figure 1 shows a cross-sectional view of a first
10 embodiment of a ventilation system according to the invention arranged in a facade.

Figure 2 shows a cross-sectional view of the heat exchanger of the ventilation system of figure 1.

Figures 3A and 3B show schematic view of a second
15 embodiment of a ventilation system according to the invention.

Figure 1 shows a ventilation system 1 arranged in a facade consisting of a wall 2 and a window frame 3.

The ventilation system 1 comprises a fine wire heat
20 exchanger 4. In figure 2 a cross section of this heat exchanger 4 is shown. The heat exchanger 4 has first channels 5 and second channels 6. Heat is exchanged between the first channels 5 and the second channels 6 by fine wires 7.

Air AI from the inside of the room which is adjacent
25 to the facade enters the first channel 5 through opening 8. In this opening 8 a ventilator 9 is arranged, which sucks in the air AI. The air AI is then guided through the heat exchanger 4 and leaves the ventilation system through opening 10.

30 Fresh outside air AO enters the heat exchanger through opening 11 into the second channels 6 in which it takes up the heat from the inside air AI. The heated fresh

air AO is then blown out of the ventilation system 1 by a ventilator 12.

In order to balance the flows of inside air AI and outside air AO the ventilators 8, 12 are controlled. The temperature of the inside air AI entering the heat exchanger is measured and the temperature, when the air leaves the heat exchanger 4. Also the temperature of the outside air AO entering the heat exchanger 4 is measured and the temperature of the outside air AO when it leaves the heat exchanger. The temperature drop of the inside air AI should be the same as the temperature rise of the outside air AO. If this state is reached the fine wire heat exchanger 4 has the largest efficiency. This state can be reached by controlling both ventilators 8 and 12.

Figures 3A and 3B show a second embodiment of a ventilation system 20 according to the invention. The ventilation system 20 comprises a first double acting cylinder 21 with a piston 22. The piston defines the cylinder 21 into a first chamber 23 and a second chamber 24.

The ventilation system 20 has furthermore a second double acting cylinder 25 with a piston 26. This piston defines the cylinder 25 into a third chamber 27 and a fourth chamber 28. Both pistons 22 and 26 are connected to each other. The four chambers 23, 24, 27, 28 are connected through a series of tubing 29, 30 in which three valves 31, 32, 33 are arranged. In figure 3A the three valves 31, 32, 33 are in a first position.

Inside air AI is drawn in by a ventilator 34. Outside air AO flows through a heat exchanger 35 and enters the first chamber 23. Due to the driving force of the ventilator and to the pressure difference between the outside air AO and the inside air AI, the both pistons 22, 26 are moved to the right. Due to this movement air from the fourth chamber 28 is

expelled through opening 36 into a room. Air in the second chamber 24 is urged through the heat exchanger 35 and to the outside. When the pistons 22, 26 reach their outer right position the valves 31, 32, 33 are put in their second
5 position, shown in figure 3B. Inside air AI is now urged into the second room 24 and outside air AO is drawn into the fourth room 28. Again due to the pressure difference the pistons 22, 26 are now moved to the left. The Inside air AI, which was stored in the third chamber 27 is now urged through
10 the heat exchanger 35. The outside air AO, which was stored in the first room 23 is now expelled through opening 36 to the inside.

This mechanism ensures that both air flows are balanced.